

BE INFORMED:

# Teething Basics

Teething can be a trying time for both babies and parents.



Did you know that when your baby is born, all 20 of their baby teeth are already developed below the gums, ready to appear when they are 4-7 months old? The teething process, however, begins a few months before their first tooth makes its grand appearance.

For our little ones who don't understand what's happening, it can be a painful and frustrating time, and even more so for parents who have no way of explaining what's going on. Here are some tips to help make life a little more pleasant for everyone.

## Symptoms of Teething

- ➔ **DROOL, DROOL, & MORE DROOL** Teething stimulates saliva production, and most babies haven't fully mastered the swallow reflex until they are at least 18 months old.
- ➔ **CHEWING** Babies and even toddlers who are teething chew on anything they can get their precious little hands on.
- ➔ **INCREASED FUSSINESS OR OTHER BEHAVIOR CHANGES** Some parents notice a correlation between a cranky baby, crying spells, and a lack of appetite with a child that's ready to cut a tooth. If your mouth hurt and you didn't know why you'd be cranky too!

## Soothing the Symptoms



When a baby is teething, you can't explain what's happening to them, but you can soothe their symptoms using some tried-and-true, non-medicinal methods. There may not be a way to eliminate the discomfort caused by teething, but you can make life a little more comfortable for them and you!

### Give these techniques a try:

#### ✓ PREVENT RASHES

All that drool means chapped skin and irritated cheeks. Keep their skin clean and healthy by wiping your baby's face regularly with a soft, cool cloth.

#### ✓ TRY A TEETHER

A solid teether might help relieve some of the discomfort. Be sure to avoid teethers with liquid inside because they may break or leak. Pediatricians also recommend placing them in the refrigerator, not the freezer. A frozen teether is too cold for your baby's delicate gum tissue.

#### ✓ MASSAGE

When your baby is having a tough time, massaging their gums with a clean finger can relieve teething discomfort.



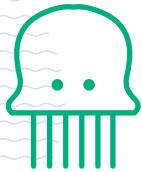
Please note that if your child seems to be in a lot of pain or none of the above techniques offer any relief, contact their doctor to see if there could be another reason for your child's discomfort.



While there is some great parenting advice out there about teething, there are a lot of myths and old home remedies that should NEVER be done to relieve teething pain.

DID YOU KNOW...

It is recommended that a child visit the dentist around their **1<sup>st</sup> Birthday** or **1<sup>st</sup> Tooth**



Final Notes...

While some parents swear that fever and diarrhea are also teething symptoms, teething doesn't usually cause high fever or diarrhea. If your baby has a fever or experiences regular bouts of diarrhea, teething may not be the cause, and you should contact your pediatrician for an exam.

It's important to mention that while some parents notice a correlation between their child's teething and one or more of these symptoms, other children don't exhibit any signs of teething. Every child is different. With a little patience and some extra snuggles, your baby will get through this trying stage of development, and the discomfort they experienced and the sleep that was lost will soon be just another entry in their baby book.

A SHORT LIST OF DON'TS

- ! Never boil a teether to clean it because it could cause chemicals to leach out or alter the plastic's composition.
- ! Never give your child necklaces with stones in them to chew on. Metal in the chain may contain lead, and stones are a choking hazard.
- ! Don't tie or pin a teether to your child's clothes because it could get caught and pose a strangling or choking hazard.
- ! Never give pain relievers without checking with your child's pediatrician or dentist.
- ! Never rub alcohol on your child's gums.
- ! Don't use teething gels or tablets on babies under 2. According to a report released by the FDA, benzocaine, the active ingredient in many children's teething products, poses some severe health risks. Many manufacturers have replaced benzocaine with other ingredients but reading the label and asking your child's doctor for recommendations is still the best advice.



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